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### MILITARY PROCUREMENT AUTHORIZATION, 1975

[Conclusion of Mr. Dellums' Remarks]  
REFUGEE LIVING CONDITIONS

The horrible living conditions of the refugees have also been generally corroborated by American GIs and Congressional investigators. Here is a description by David Tuck, an infantryman in the US Army:

From what I could see from these people they looked just like they were starving . . . shortly after we got there [to the refugee camp] I was on a work detail to dump some garbage . . . as soon as we dumped this these refugees—a whole lot, a horde of children, it seemed—literally jumped into this sump [hole full of garbage] and fought like animals for the garbage. They also had to be in their refugee camps at a certain time because if they showed up outside our perimeter or outside the South Vietnamese perimeter they were liable to be shot as VC.<sup>27</sup>

The reason for this sorry state of affairs was not far to seek. All the means of livelihood of the refugees had been destroyed, official relief was minimal (about 5 cents a day per person), and 75 per cent of the money intended for the resettlement allowances was siphoned off in graft.<sup>28</sup> In fact, according to the December 13, 1967 of *Song Moi*, a conservative Saigon newspaper, fewer than 6 million piasters out of the 71 million allocated for refugees in Quang Nam ever found their way to these people. The same newspaper writes:

In order to get a place to stay in the government "camps for refugees fleeing from Communism" people have to go to the authorities at least five to seven times with bribes. When they have found a place where they might be sheltered from the sun and rain, a few weeks later a "decree" would arrive from the district chief or the police director ordering them to come in for an investigation. They would be interrogated about their activities while they were still living in the countryside: whether they were had contact with the Viet Cong or whether they had paid their rice tax or their annual tax—all must be told. If the peasant is naive and does not understand what the authorities want [i.e., bribes]—in other words if he does not let them sniff and smell a few 500-piaster bills—he is in deep trouble, including imprisonment. That is to say, being detained for further investigation! The only thing the peasant can do now is to call to heaven for the relief of his hunger and he is further distressed because he cannot earn a living [for

his family]! . . . But a peasant who knows the situation knows that he has to give at least 10,000 to 15,000 piasters to get a place to stay.

At that time, 10,000 to 15,000 piasters was about the same as the monthly salary of a colonel in the Army or of a university professor. On the other hand, it would amount to the lifetime savings of a peasant.

Meanwhile, the situation of those peasants who escaped being taken to the "camps for refugees fleeing from Communism" but who instead flocked into the urban centers was not any brighter. Old men and women became beggars. Young boys shined shoes, washed cars, picked pockets, and pinched for their sisters or mothers. Girls and young women became barmaids and prostitutes. Older women did laundry and their husbands drove pedicabs or worked as day laborers—all in the service of the Americans who had destroyed their homes and villages. To be sure, the Americans were able to "empty out" parts of the countryside, but they were not able to dry up the ocean. They only moved parts of it into the urban centers and it was in these urban seas that the revolutionary fish could swim freely. There was ample evidence pointing to this fact. Here are a few examples. A *New York Times* article on May 24, 1967 reported that

Enemy forces overran Quang Tri city, the province capital, freed 250 guerrillas from jail and successfully attacked two regimental headquarters of the South Vietnamese First Infantry Division . . .

A few days later, in a series of events that were not fully reported at that time, they moved virtually unmolested in Hue, while the army and the national police fled. [emphasis added—ed.]

A second example is given by *Song*, the CIA-supported Saigon daily, on December 10, 1967:

The enemy forces did not exceed 100 men while in the province capital [of Quang Ngai] there were thousands of riflemen, many field officers, and all kinds of brave-looking outfits. The police in white and striped clothes alone outnumbered the enemy forces by four to one and could easily have repulsed the enemy if they had wanted to or had cared to shoot. [Emphasis added.]

But the American authorities refused to grasp the significance of these reports and went ahead with their policy of "emptying the countryside" until the events of the Tet offensive of 1968 slapped them coldly in the face. Although the city population knew of the planned attacks beforehand and many of them had actually moved away from the target areas, none of them reported it to the Americans and the Saigon authorities! The population in South Vietnam's urban centers clearly supported the other side. Learning of this, the Americans, instead of trying to take back the towns and cities with

ground troops (which they realized would be a near impossibility), made the decision to bomb them until the NLF forces withdrew. Some cities were 90 per cent destroyed.

#### POWER OF DENIAL

In any event, the Americans learned a precious lesson from the Tet offensive. They learned that they had the power of denial. NLF forces could not take over cities again without risking their destruction. The more people you "urbanized" the more difficult it would be for the NLF to mobilize their support. American academics advising the US government began to rehash pacification theories and cloaked them in new terms. Samuel Huntington of Harvard University, for example, wrote in July 1968 that the United States might have "stumbled upon" a solution to popular wars of national liberation through "forced-draft urbanization." He argued optimistically that because of forced urbanization, "Time in South Vietnam is increasingly on the side of the Government."<sup>29</sup> And American officials in Vietnam concentrated their efforts on carrying out the new "Accelerated Pacification Program." There was no more talk about "winning hearts and minds." Nor was there any more talk of gaining or regaining more territory. Henry Kissinger, for example, wrote in his famous article which appeared in the January 1969 issue of *Foreign Affairs* that the crux of the pacification program was to get more people and not to gain more territory.

The concern now was how to deprive the "revolutionary fish" (the guerrillas) of the water (the rural population) as quickly as possible. "Accelerated Pacification" thus meant increased punishment of the rural areas through bombing, artillery shelling, chemical spraying, and "mop-up" operations. During the first three years of the Nixon administration 7 million tons of high explosives, or the equivalent of about three times the tonnage of bombs dropped on all fronts during the Second World War, were expended on South Vietnam alone. Out of this about 3 million tons were delivered by artillery strikes. The most noticeable result of these air and artillery strikes, according to the . . .

#### CRATERIZATION

April 6, 1971 issue of *Look* magazine, was the destruction of dams, dikes and canals and mile upon mile of "rice fields pockmarked with millions of large craters filled with water in which malarial mosquitoes have been breeding in epidemic numbers."

During the same period 60,000 "mop-up" operations involving more than a battalion of "allied" troops—most of them Vietnamese—were directed against inhabited areas of South Vietnam. The Saigon regime claimed in early 1972 that it carried out an average of 300 mop-up operations every day.

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Footnotes at end of article.